

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. The Examiner has requested that a copy of the form PTO-1449 from the Information Disclosure Statement filed on July 11, 2003 be submitted. Claim 12 was objected to due to informalities. Claims 1-6, 8-15 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Schöppe, U.S. Patent No. 5,861,984. Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schöppe.

Claim 12 and the drawings Fig. 2 have been amended.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Form PTO-1449

The Examiner has requested that a copy of the form PTO-1449 from the Information Disclosure Statement filed on July 11, 2003 be submitted. A copy of that PTO-1449 is accordingly submitted herewith.

Amendment to drawings

Fig. 2 has been amended to correct the reference number for detector 45 (from 47), as discussed in the specification at page 8, line 24. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

Objection to claim 12

Claim 12 was objected to due to informalities. Claim 12 has now been amended to correctly recite that the entrance angle and the exit angle are different, which change is supported by claim 1, for example, and to properly recite that partial beam bundles are divided from the light beam bundle by the optical component.

Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a)

Claims 1-6, 8-15 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being

anticipated by Schöppe, U.S. Patent No. 5,861,984. Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schöppe.

Schöppe describes a beamsplitter ST having an angle β conjointly defined by faces F1 and F2 of a prism P1, the angle β being not equal to 90 degrees. See col. 2, lines 38-45, and Fig. 2.

Independent claims 1 and 12 of the present application now recite an optical component having “a plane entrance surface through which a light beam bundle can be incoupled at an entrance angle, and a plane exit surface through which the light beam bundle can be outcoupled at an exit angle... the entrance angle and exit angle are different”. It is respectfully submitted that Schöppe does not teach that the entrance and exit angle are different. In contrast, Schöppe merely describes that the angle β between the faces F1 and F2 is not equal to 90 degrees. See Schöppe, col. 2, lines 43-45. As would be known to one of ordinary skill in the art, a prism without a right triangle can nevertheless have equal entrance and exit angles. Indeed, the prism P1 of Schöppe appears to show an entrance angle at face F1 for incident light 1 that is equal to the exit angle at face F2 for component beam 5. See Schöppe Fig. 2. In any event, Schöppe does not describe the entrance and exit angles being different, as specifically required by claims 1 and 12 of the present invention. Moreover, there would have been no reason to provide Schöppe with the feature that the entrance and exit angles are different because Schöppe solves the problem of unwanted reflections in the prism by providing the angle β not equal to 90 degrees. As it fails to teach at least the above-recited feature of claims 1 and 12, it is therefore respectfully submitted that Schöppe cannot anticipate these claims.

Additionally, with specific regard to dependent claims 4 and 13, it is respectfully submitted that Schöppe does not anticipate these claims for the additional reason that Schöppe does not teach or suggest that “the exit angle is identical for the light of at least two wavelengths”, as recited in claims 4 and 13. In contrast, the prism P1 of Schöppe actually causes a lateral splitting of multi-wavelength light (see Schöppe, col. 3, lines 47-50), which would result in different exit angles for the light of different wavelengths.

Dependent claims 7 and 16 properly depend from claims 1 and 12, respectively, and

therefore, for the reasons discussed above relative to claims 1 and 12, cannot be rendered unpatentable by Schöppe.


For at least the above reasons, withdrawal of the rejections of independent claims 1 and 12, as well as their respective dependent claims 2-11 and 13-20, is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached drawing sheet including changes to Fig. 2. This sheet replaces the original sheet including Fig. 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet.